Ezafe in the context of CPs in Persian and Kurmanji

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This study investigates the distribution of Ezafe (a nominal linker found in many Iranian languages) in the context of nouns followed by CPs, both relative clauses (RCs) and so-called noun-complement clauses (NCCs) in Persian and Kurmanji (Northern Kurdish).

Ezafe (EZ) typically appears between the head noun and modifiers that follow N [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6]. One prominent analysis of EZ takes it to be a case assigner required before all [+N] elements [1, 4, 7]. This type of analysis predicts that adnominal elements which are [–N] should not be preceded by EZ. Persian non-restrictive RCs seem to provide support for this analysis as they are not preceded by EZ (1). Meanwhile, restrictive RCs are preceded by a (so-called relative) particle –*i* (2), phonologically distinct from the regular EZ –*e*. This particle has been analyzed as an allomorph of EZ, presenting it as a counter-example to the case analysis [6]. This idea finds further support in Kurmanji, which uses the regular form of EZ with restrictive RCs (3). Under this view (contra the case analysis), EZ is used uniformly before a modifier, regardless of its [+/−N] status.

(1) dust-e   Hasan, ke   tu Tehran dars   mi-xun-e,   xeyli baahush=e
     friend-EZ Hasan that   in Tehran lesson DUR-read.PRS-3SG   very   smart=is
     'Hasan's friend, who is a student in Tehran, is very smart.'

(2) zan-i   ke   az   Tehran umad-e   xeyli   baahush=e
     woman-i   that   from Tehran came-PERF   very   smart=is
     'The woman who has come from Tehran is very smart.'

(3) Jin-a   ku   ji   Stenbol-ê   hat-iy-e   gelek zîrek e
     woman-EZ.F   that   from   Istanbul-OBL came-3SG-PERF   very   clever is
     'The woman who has come from Istanbul is very clever.'

Non-restrictive RCs in Kurmanji add an interesting twist to the data presented above, as in these contexts, Kurmanji uses a different type of EZ known as anaphoric EZ (AEZ) (4) [5].

(4) heval-a   Hasan, ya   (ku)   li   Stenbol-ê   di-xwîn-e,   gelek zîrek e
     friend-EZ.F Hasan   AEZ.F (that) in   Istanbul-OBL PROG-read.PRS-3S very clever COP
     'Hasan's friend, who is a student in Istanbul, is very clever.'

Thus, on the one hand, we have Persian with no EZ preceding a non-restrictive RC (1) and, on the other hand, we have Kurmanji with AEZ (4). Here, we follow **[8]** in analyzing non-restrictive RCs as restrictive RCs to a silent-headed NP that serves as an appositional modifier of the head noun: Head N, Silent N – restrictive RC. The distribution of EZ in Persian and Kurmanji non-restrictive RCs follows straightforwardly, as it matches the distribution of EZ following a silent N more generally: while Persian does not allow EZ in these contexts, Kurmanji uses AEZ (examples not shown here for space reasons).

Kurmanji NCCs are always linked to the head N with EZ (N-EZ CP), while Persian has been claimed to lack EZ in NCC contexts. This difference has been attributed (without independent evidence) to the alleged [+N] status of CPs in Kurmanji, as opposed to Persian [7]. But under the right circumstances, Persian allows for the possibility, previously not mentioned in the literature, of using in NCCs the same particle –*i* used with restrictive RCs: (5). These facts combined present a further challenge for the case analysis [7].

(5) {in   edeaa / edeaa-yi } ke   vaaksan xatarnaak=e=ro   man matrah   na-kard-am
      this   claim / claim-i   that   vaccine dangerous=is=RA   I   mention NEG-did-1SG
     'I didn't mention the claim that the vaccine is dangerous.'

In our proposal, underlyingly an NCC can serve either as the subject of predication for the projection of the head noun (cf. '[that S] is the claim'[9]) or as (a subpart of) the predicate for the projection of the head noun[10,11,12] – two strategies which are associated with different information-structural construals of the NCC [13]. The former strategy is input to a syntactic

derivation involving inversion and giving rise in Persian to the particle $-i$ [6]; the latter results in no particle or EZ in Persian. Under this view, Kurmanji employs the former strategy only.

This study argues that the distribution of EZ in the context of adnominal clauses in Kurmanji and Persian follows from the general behaviour of EZ and the syntax of N-CP structures.

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